

Awakening Democracy

CAPaD – the Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy

NOVEMBER 2024

G'day members, supporters and friends

In this [Awakening Democracy: ACT Election wrap up](#), **Democracy Sizzle December 8**, federal election information launch, Achieving Political Renewal ... more to read, hear and watch.



COMING UP / HAPPENINGS

Purpose – building Wellbeing Economy Governments

Film event supported by CAPaD. **November 13** 6pm to 8pm, Gang Gangs Downer.

Purpose is a documentary feature film which follows the journey of two political economists, Katherine Trebeck & Lorenzo Fioramonti, with a simple dream: Change the way progress is measured in order to change what governments do.



Over two years this film traces their efforts to build Wellbeing Economy Governments, with Lorenzo also entering parliament to change a G7 government from the inside. It's ambitious stuff and their journey is anything but smooth sailing.

Following the film, we'll sit down with economist, author and proud Canberran, Katherine Trebeck, to delve into all things wellbeing economy (as much as we can fit into 20 minutes), in conversation and with an opportunity for questions from the audience, where we collectively ask, "what's next?" particularly in our hometown, this beautiful city of Canberra.

Book your ticket and watch a short trailer [at this link](#).

Achieving Political Renewal

The [Progressive Action Lab](#), set up by Justin Ryan, seeks to start a conversation about the practice of renewing our government systems, and in particular the selecting for candidates and ultimately about how political parties might be reformed. This links to CAPaD's work on getting the best people for the job of representative.

December 1, 2pm, Polish Club in Turner.

This fits beside CAPaD's aim to have 2025 conversations, building on this year's Democracy in Action! Conversations, about MP job descriptions and candidate forums for the federal election that measures candidates against the job description.

ELECTION 2024 REFLECTION

Despite small turn out in voter engagement and candidate attendance, this activity has been the next logical step in our education for community, voters and parties and candidates about a new way of thinking about representation in a Westminster parliamentary system. With the advocacy work done by many other organisations around integrity and the establishment of a federal integrity commission, and with the advent of community independents, a more active process than the previous candidate statement exercises was required. The Democracy in Action! Conversations provided a structured way to engage community members without the intensity of the work to set up and support a Kitchen Table process with only volunteers.

The candidate briefings and the Know Your Candidate forums gave candidates and voters the opportunity to experience and hopefully learn from a different way of meeting each other and for voters to find out about

candidates beyond party / group policies and promises. While some respondents were critical of the level of publicity and the process of the forum, most respondents to the surveys and in conversations outside the formal assessment found on balance it was a useful exercise that had influence on how people voted. Some candidates also learnt new things and gained valuable experience despite there being a lower positive rating from candidates.

Taking the conversation about an MP job description forward as the next stage of this education activity into the federal election so soon after the ACT election, will hopefully firm up understanding and broaden the appeal of what we are trying to achieve with better quality MPs and more informed voters.

Based in our own experience and the feedback surveys from participants (candidates and voters), CAPaD committee makes these points:

The forums

Candidates spent too much of their brief time on life history that was available elsewhere.

Therefore we need fewer questions and to make questions simpler / more explicit and be more directive in what we want.

Many voters were not aware of the questions; it is necessary to have the questions visible in the room for the audience and as a prompt to focus candidates.

Publicity

Using our own mailing lists and our own and other organisations' newsletters, and a limited amount of mainstream media, provided best reach to people. Despite that we heard that our publicity was insufficient. We open to suggestions for improving our publicity and promotions.

Democratic Inclusiveness

We note two different approaches to candidate inclusion in candidate forums. The CCACTR and RiotACT excluded minor parties and small independent groups and individual; we feel that this is non-democratic. CAPaD, Woden Valley and Tuggeranong Community Councils were inclusive of all candidates, demonstrating a stronger commitment to democratic processes.

Further, CAPaD's different but complementary approach was our focus on the potential MLA's actual practice; that is how will they operate when in office?

The full much more [detailed report](#) is on the CAPaD website, as is a briefer [executive summary](#).

Continuing the Democracy in Action Conversations

Links to all the outputs of these conversations are [on our Election page](#).

The plan is to hold one or two conversations early next year to pose the question: What is the job on an MP? And then, how do we see if our MPs measure up? How do we report this, and how do we feedback to our representatives?

More about this in December.



Democracy Sizzle December 8, 2024

Noon, Weston Park barbeques complex, to celebrate the year, hang out and chat. All CAPaD members and friends welcome.
BYO plate +/- own sustenance and beverages.



ACTIVE PROJECTS

ACTIVE
DEMOCRACY
AUSTRALIA

(ADAus) We continue to receive requests for involvement and for additions to electorate webpages.



Active Democracy Bean

Local Politics in the Pub Events; third Monday of each month, 5:30pm to 7:30pm
Austrian Australian Club in Mawson. Next event, November 18th: **election analyst Malcolm Baalman's 2024 ACT election wrap.**

Then they are taking a break till February.

They welcome suggestions for topics and speakers for next year – just reply to this email with your ideas.

Any questions or interest to join us? Contact activedemocracybean@outlook.com.

Active Democracy Bean [has a Facebook page](#) for the latest what is on and information. More about Bean and ADB on their [webpage](#). **The Active Democracy ACT [site is here](#).**

THINGS TO LISTEN TO, WATCH AND READ

Our standing reminders about:

- [Democracy Sausage podcast](#) from the ANU Public Policy Institute. Lots of very topical topics, and
- [Juice Media](#) for an [irreverent and spicy look at current politics](#) in Australia and beyond.
- [Punters Politics](#) [another comedic look](#) at Australia's political goings on.
- [Crazy Town](#) From [the Post Carbon Institute \(go to Products/Podcasts\)](#). 2025 season looking at how to escape Crazy Town.

All **available** from your favourite podcast service.

Reflecting on the Trump win, and how that might play out in Australia in the lead into the federal election, a couple of thoughts:

- [This analysis](#), which I've heard from a couple of sources, is worth thinking about,
- Despair resulting in inaction leads to authoritarians winning and lots of species including ours losing,
- So acting is therapeutic on many levels.

For CAPaD that means working harder at getting our representatives doing their job well for us, the people and

our planet. That means getting accountability mechanisms in place so MPs/MLAs have to personally, directly and frequently (not just at elections) answer to us. Our 2025 project in setting up this system is therefore critical.

If you've read this far you care, so believe change is possible and I invite you to contribute to making it happen.

From your committee

Contact us: secretary@canberra-alliance.org.au

Keep up to date: <https://canberra-alliance.org.au/>

Share ideas: [Twitter \(X\)](#) @CAPADACT

Find us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1487360858250888/>

